School of Management Studies

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SYNOPSIS FOR PHD REGISTRATION

Proposed Research Topic: "Work Life and Service Quality in Universities of J&K: A Case Study".

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Every organization even today is facing unique problems, some organizations may lack in technology, few may lack financial strength, few may lack in providing feasible working conditions to their employees, some organizations stick to the basic products/services which tend to be obsolete, or some organizations may lack in offering job security to their employees All these factors effect work life which implies to Quality of work life in any organization. Work life or Quality of work life is no more a specialized phrase but has become a necessity and important thing for the survival of the organizations. The term QWL was introduced by Louis Davis (1972) at the first international quality of work-Life conference held in Toronto. In this era, quality of work life being offered to the human inputs is the greatest asset to any organization. Maintaining the quality of such human inputs rises from maintaining the quality of worklife perfectly, researchers argue that, rise in the quality of work life would help employee's well being there by well being of the whole organization.

To deliver in consonance with the customer expectations the employees of the business organizations need to be provided with an environment that helps them to deliver to the desired levels of the concerned. Thus, the quality of work life (QWL) offered to the employee plays an important role in shaping organizational effectiveness and growth. QWL means bringing work place the maximum democratic life style, balance between the need of production and the need of employee's self fulfillment, thus QWL is an alternative control approach of managing individuals in a work place. QWL has been defined by researchers as the quality of relationship between the employees and the total working environment. QWL is concerned with the overall climate of work, the impact on work, people and organization effectiveness. Quality of work-life is the extent of relationships between individuals and organizational factors that exists in the working environment. QWL is the extent to which workers can satisfy important personal needs through their experiences in the organization. It is focusing strongly on providing a work environment conducive to satisfy individual needs. It is assumed that if employees have more positive attitudes about the organization and their productivity increases, everything else being equal, the organization should be more effective. Post liberalization, environment gave rise to stiff competition as number of industries operational increases manifold, which altogether emerged as a factor in giving birth to competitive business environment in India. Industries in India therefore had to think as how to face them, sustain and survive.

The QWL approach considers people as an ‘asset' to the organization rather than ‘costs'. It believes that people perform better when they are allowed to participate in managing their work and make decisions. This approach motivates people by satisfying not only their economic needs but also their social and psychological ones. To satisfy the new generation workforce, organizations concentrate on job designs and organization work, in the form of job-fit. Further, today's workforce is realizing the importance of relationships and is trying to strike a balance between career and self. Successful organizations support and provide facilities to their people to help them to balance the scales. In this process, organizations are coming up with new and innovative ideas to improve the quality of work and quality of working life of every individual in the organization. Organizations are enjoying the fruits of implementing QWL programs in the form of increased productivity, and an efficient, satisfied, and committed workforce which aims to achieve organizational objectives. As described by Cohen and Rosenthal (1983), QWL is an internationally designed effort to bring about increased labour management cooperation to jointly solve the problem of organizations performance and employee satisfaction. Any attempt at improving the performance of the organization can be successful only if the organization is able to develop a strong quality of work life. The term quality of worklife thus, refers to the favorableness or un-favorableness of a total job environment for people. The basic purpose is to develop jobs and working conditions that are excellent for people as well as for the economic health of the organization. QWL to be precise is a process being pursued at all levels by the organizations so that it enables them to outline organizational environment, methods and outcomes as desired by the concerned(employees and customers). Thus, better QWL leads to superior performance by delivering quality to its end users in the form of service quality.

In present world scenario every organization, may be a service or manufacturing, the intangibles associated with their products defines the fate of the organization in the long run. These intangibles are nothing but the services (supplementary services) being offered along with the core product/service. As per Theodore Levitt “There are no such things as service industries. There are only industries whose service components are greater or less than those of other industries. Everybody is in service.” Zeithaml and Bitner (1996) defined service as “deeds, processes, and performances”. While explaining service quality we know that quality of service is a broader term that is used in both customer care evaluations and in technological evaluations. In both applications, the quality of service has to deal with measuring the incidence of errors

within a process that result in the creation of issues for the end user which is a customer. The term quality emphasis on the inherent or distinctive characteristics or properties of a person, objects and other thing, such characteristics makes a distinction from others. The term service may be defined as human efforts which succor to the needy. It is also opined that the service quality can be broken in two quality dimensions, namely technical quality and functional quality. Technical quality draws our attention on the inventions and innovations in the field of technology that help to improve service quality. Functional quality refers as how the technical quality elements of the service are transferred. It is influenced by improving the quality of services offered by the employees. This reflects that the perception of service quality keeps on changing due to changes in technological and functional aspects. Lewis and Booms (1983), refers service quality as a measure of the degree to which the service delivered matches customers expectation by delivering quality service, it means conforming to customer's expectation on a consistent basis. Further, it has been observed that by delivering superior quality of service has been recognized as the most effective means of ensuring that company's offerings stand out from a crowd of look-alike competitive offerings. The customer's perception of quality of service is based on agreement between expectation and experience where comparability is apparent, the customer is deemed to be satisfied, however in many cases this will not be enough to get a competitive edge there is need to make continuous improvements in order to deliver services, to exceed customer expectation, (Parasuraman, 1995). Different definition of service quality has been put-forth by the researchers over the period of time. Some authors believe that service quality directly effects on the customers satisfaction (Arasli et al., 2005). It also creates competitive advantage over the other and it is associated with the successful organization. Service quality also have a great impact on the profitability and cost of the firm, as the service quality have a great impact on the customers behavior by delivering good quality of services with the result there is customer retention, reduction of cost and increased profitability. Zeithaml et al, (2006) refers service quality as "the degree and direction of discrepancy between consumer's perception and expectation in terms of different but relatively important dimensions of the service quality which can affect their future behavior". This interpretation of service quality is thoroughly useful as it has been widely accepted by researchers while examining service quality issues. Service quality is a term which describes a comparison of expectations

with performance. The goal of any quality of service evaluation is to minimize the incidence of issues and the error rates that may result in customer dissatisfaction.

According to Berry et al. (1988), service quality has become a great differentiator and the most powerful competitive weapon which many leading service organizations possess. Service business success has been associated with the ability to deliver superior service (Gale, 1990; Rudie & Wansley, 1984).Delivering superior service by maintaining high quality is a prerequisite for success (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Leading service organizations strive to maintain a superior quality of service in an effort to gain customer loyalty (Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996). As customers are becoming increasingly critical of the quality of service they experience (Albrecht & Zemke, 1985), it makes service quality as one of the important factors for deriving competitive advantage over other competitors for survival in the long run. In order to excel and deliver better quality the organization need to provide better quality of work life to their employees. Customer's perception of exceptional service is often associated with the personal interaction of the employees (Kandampully, 1993). Services management literature has repeatedly emphasized the importance of the human element in the delivery of superior service (Crosby & Stephens, 1987; Gronroos, 1990; Parasuraman et al., 1985; Solomon et al., 1985).

Researchers have argued that organizational growth is directly proportional to the outcome of relationship between satisfied employees and satisfied customers. Zemke (1989) argues that in many organizations known for exemplary customer service, employees are indeed more satisfied because they are treated with same respect with which they are expected to treat their customers. Rainayee and Bhat (2007) have evaluated the relationship between SQ and QWL in the banking sector and have concluded that besides improving tangibles that are associated with the services in the banking sector, it is imperative to consistently improve quality of work-life (QWL) of the employees. The study further reflects that improving QWL will go a long way in ensuring customer delight and employee commitment to achieve greater heights in delivering service quality.

Normala, Daud(2010) emphasized that determining the quality of work life (QWL) of employees is an important consideration for employers interested in improving employee's job satisfaction and commitment. The investigation showed the relationship between quality of work life and organizational commitment. Further seven QWL variables where identified which

include growth and development, participation, physical environment, supervision, pay and benefits and social relevance were examined to determine their relationship with organizational commitment. The results showed that there was a relationship between QWL and organizational commitment and it thus provides insights on how firms could improve upon their employee's commitment.

Pereda et.al (2007) while studying service quality in Higher Education revealed that four factors of service quality namely recognition, quality of instruction and interaction with faculty, sufficiency of resources, and aspects of physical quality are the most significant and important findings revealed that students are directly attached to their institution's reputation. Maria Tsinidou, et.al (2010) while evaluating the factors that determine quality in higher education highlighted that besides other thing quality of infrastructure for teaching and laboratories, subsidized catering and accommodation services are important for the majority of students. Also the availability of textbooks and journals is the main factor influencing the quality according to students. Malik (2010) highlighted the impact of service quality on student's satisfaction in Higher Education Institutes and the results show that students are satisfied with services of Tangibility, Assurance, Reliability and Empathy but not much satisfied with parking facilities, computer labs, cafeteria services, complaint handling system. Behnam Talebi et.al (2012) revealed that there is a significant relationship between the variables of salary and benefits, job security, healthy and secure work environment, autonomy at work, providing the basis for skills education, and determining the job development direction with the employees effectiveness, which ultimately shows a relationship between the employee's Quality of Work Life (QWL) and their effectiveness in service organization. Atousa Taimouri et.al (2012) showed that there is a relationship between that the academic unit, work experience, tendency to change, academic ranking, quality of work life, level of education among Faculty Members. T S Nanjundeswaraswamy et.al (2012) studied that effective leader influences the followers in a desired manner to achieve goals. It is evident from the literature different leadership styles may affect organization effectiveness and performance. The interventions of QWL will effectively utilize the employee potentials by ensuring great participation and involvement of workers. According to Pugalendh et.al (2010) while working on Quality of work life Perception of college teachers they concluded that QWL is the shared responsibility not only of the management and employees, but also by the society. To improve QWL first identify and then try to satisfy

employee's important needs through their experience in their working environment. Depending upon the situational requirements, management may select the relevant needs of the employee's to improve them with a short term plan. There is a significant association between quality of work life and quality of life in teaching environment. It shows that planned change in the working environment is the need of the hour to improve QWL in India. Improved flexible working environment can be an answer to the multifarious roles of the Indian employees. Their research is to enhance the QWL of the college teachers by integrating the task role and social role, such that the synergies are effectively obtained.

Need of the Study (Research gap)

From the literature above it can be concluded that despite attempts have been made to study service quality and quality of work life (QWL) in business organization, in higher education/universities independently but there are fewer studies wherein an attempt has been made for the analysis and management of Service Quality (SQ) and Quality of Work life (QWL) in Universities in particular. Moreover, very little studies have been undertaken to study the relationship between the QWL and SQ in the education sector of Jammu and Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir is the northernmost state of India. It is situated mostly in the Himalayan Mountains. The University-level education is provided by University of Jammu, University of Kashmir, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Jammu, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, Islamic University of Science & Technology, Baba Ghulam Shah Badhshah University, Central University of Kashmir and Central University of Jammu. Education sector is a significant and most important factor of prosperity of the country and is the most important indicator of socio-economic development. The National Education Policy of 1986, of Government of India has observed that "In sum, education is a unique investment in present and the future". The world economy is changing as knowledge becomes a key source of wealth. As knowledge becomes more important, so, too does higher education.(World Bank/OECD, 2006). According to UNESCO, higher education is no longer referred as a opulence in-fact it has become an essential tool for national, social and economic development. According to Education for All (EFA) as many societies strive to universalize basic education, they face the momentous challenge of providing conditions where genuine learning can take place for each

and every learner. Quality must be seen in light of how societies define the purpose of education. (E.F.A., Global Monitoring Report, 2005). Further, the services sector has been growing at a rate of more than 8% per annum in recent years with education sector contributing to it significantly and thus more than half of our GDP is accounted from the services sector. In services, service provider is in direct contact with the end user, likewise in higher education system while offering services the employees require to deal with students (customer) in groups. It is therefore imperative for the employees (teaching and non teaching staff) of Universities to be provided with superior working environment that refers to QWL so that they deliver superior quality to the students (customers) which refers to SQ. As reflected not many studies have been carried out in Universities of J&K to examine QWL and SQ. In order to bridge the gap the present study is taken up in major Universities of the state in an attempt to analysis the perceptual response of the students and faculty (teaching and non teaching staff) so to examine service quality (SQ) and quality of work life (QWL) respectively.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study will be carried out keeping in view the following specific objectives.

- To examine the nature of Quality of Work Life (QWL) and Service Quality (SQ) prevalent in the Universities of J&K State across various dimensions.
- To compare and contrast QWL and SQ prevalent in various Universities of the State under study.
- To study and compare the status of QWL across the perceptual response of faculty and the staff.
- To study and compare the degree of SQ across perceptual response of students and scholars as the stakeholders.
- To draw out conclusion and recommend on the basis of the findings.

HYPOTHESES

In consonance with aforesaid objectives, the following hypotheses have been laid down for verification and conformation.

- QWL and SQ being offered by the Universities of Jammu and Kashmir is fairly good.
- QWL and SQ in the different Universities of J&K is of same nature.
- QWL and SQ prevalent in the Universities of J&K do not differ significantly across the year of establishment of the University, faculty/Department to which the respondents belong.
- There is high degree of positive correlation between QWL and SQ in Universities in Jammu and Kashmir.

RESEARCH METHODLOGY

With a view to achieve objectives and test the hypotheses laid, the data shall be collected through both primary and secondary sources. Primary data will be collected through a structured questionnaire administered to teaching, non-teaching staff and students from different Universities in Jammu and Kashmir. The technique of stratified random sampling shall be used to select the sample for obtaining data pertaining to QWL from teaching and non-teaching staff (gazetted cadre), and students referring to SQ.

To measure QWL insights from literature will lead to the development of questionnaire and the questionnaire adopted and used by Khan (2011), Rainayee and Bhat (2007), Kalra and Gosh (1987), Carlson (1987) and Walton (1973) shall be taken into account after testing the reliability of the questionnaire through the pilot study. The instrument namely SERQUAL developed by Parsuraman. et.al (1988) shall be administered to the customers (students and scholars) to determine service quality (SQ) being offered by the employees in the Universities of the State. Further some more questions identified from the insights from literature shall be added to questionnaire if deemed proper to measure service quality.

The secondary data shall be collected from various reliable sources such as journals, books, magazines, statistical digests, Universities records, and educational publications, news papers, past researches done in the field, projects, and many other sources. More over data shall also be collected from internet, which will facilitate collection of latest data in this area of research.

The data thus collected from primary and secondary sources shall be analyzed by various statistical techniques according to need and requirement bases so as to arrive at authentic conclusions.

The dimensions of QWL which will be explored in the present study to identify the nature of existing QWL in Universities include the following

1. Adequate Income and Fair Compensation : refers to Income and fair compensation in terms of money are the real motivators to work efficiently
2. Safe and Healthy Working Conditions refers to better working conditions that are physically and psychologically safe helps in improving the efficiency at work place.
3. Opportunity to Use and Develop Human Capacities refers to a fact that Human resource development philosophy says human can be developed in terms of competency, skill development at any stage of life
4. Opportunity for Continued Growth that refers to a fact Stagnation in one particular role leads to ineffective performance, in an organization to achieve superior performance and consistently grow employees need to provided ample opportunities to grow.
5. Social Integration in the Work Organization refers to a positive relationship i.e. binding at work place is imperative as isolation at work place can be detrimental for the individual and the organization as a whole.
6. Participative decision making i.e. in an organization, every employee should have a say in decision making that creates a sense of belongingness among the employees.
7. Rewards and Punishment makes it evident that these tow are the two sides of the coin when used judiciously leads to better performance
8. Equity, Justice and Grievance referring to its implementation and redressal.
9. Work and total life space refers to Role overlaps hampers job effectiveness in context with social obligation fulfillment, transfers and leisure pursuit
10. Image of Universities in the society in context with quality, environment and service delivery irrespective of caste, creed and color
11. Work load and job stress refers to its balance so as work effectively
12. Employee welfare and benefits, refers to measures in these areas to lower abseentism , employee attrition etc

Another pretested instrument comprising of 22 statements besides adding few more questions to it which shall be developed from the insights from literature if deemed proper shall be administered to the customers of the universities which includes students (post graduate students) and the research scholars belonging to various universities and the departments. These dimensions of service quality include the following:

1. Empathy, it refers to the level of caring and individual attention provided to customers. Researchers have proven that empathy in terms of customer relationship with service providers is an influential factor on customer satisfaction. It focuses on customer's specific needs.
2. Responsiveness, it means enthusiasm or readiness of service provider to help customers and provide timely services
3. Tangibility, this refers to physical amenities including equipments and employees. It is seem ambience plays a vital role in service delivery
4. Reliability, this refers to perform service with precision and unvaryingly effectively. Researchers have shown customer satisfaction is high when service delivered by the service provider reflects consistency and honesty.
5. Assurance, this refers to employees/teachers to build trust and confidence among the students and scholars.
6. Courtesy**,** this refers to graciousness, admiration, deliberation, physical appearance and sociability of the teachers/non teaching officers while delivering services to the students and scholars.

Respondent's opinion or feeling shall be sought in this particular case as how they perceive the teaching facility being offered to them and the perception of the role of non teaching gazetted officers at the time of result, admission and other allied support being offered to them. The respondents shall have to answer all the statements on a seven point scale (1-7), ranging from strongly disagree, generally disagree, slightly disagree to strongly agree.

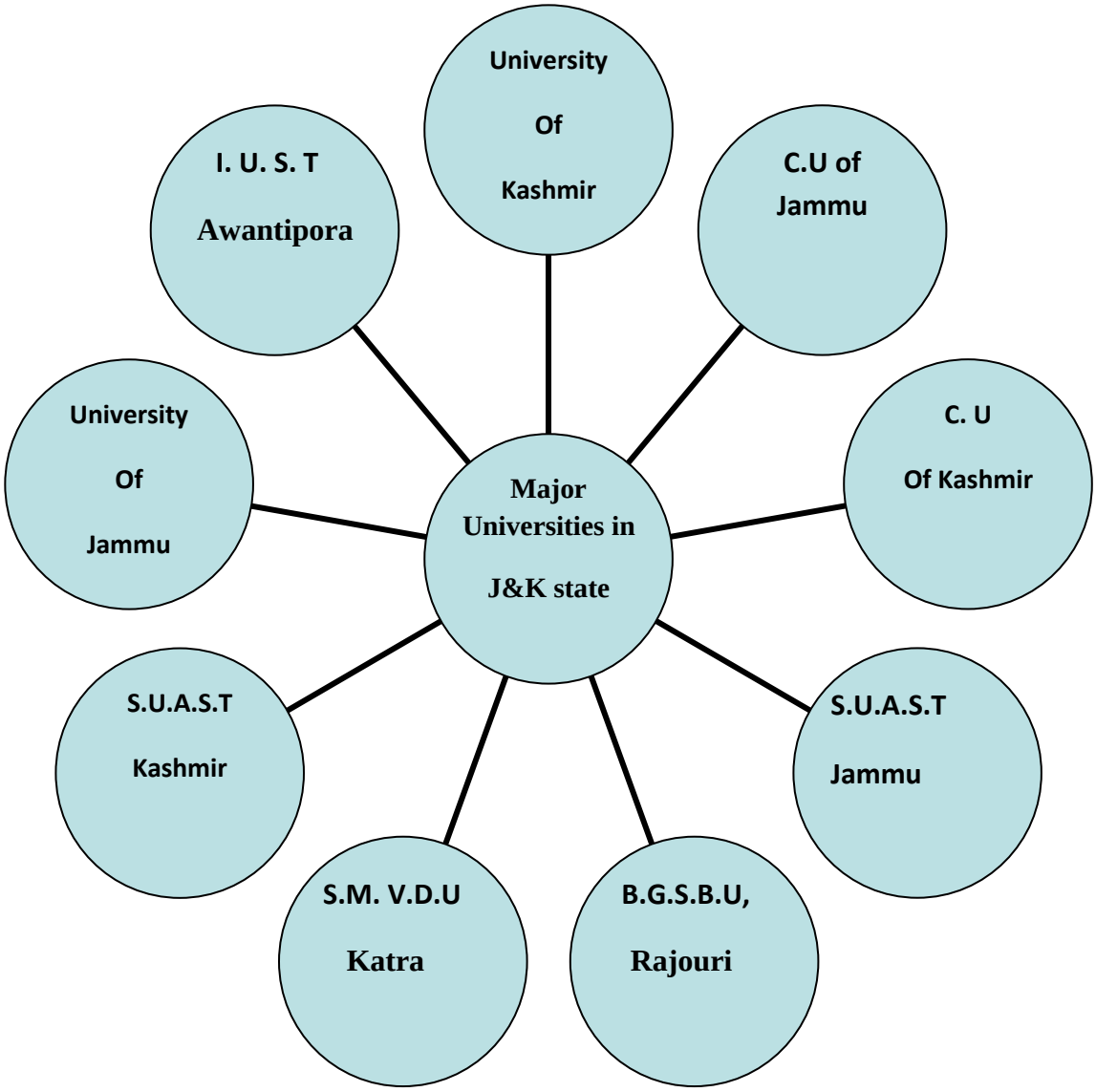
Sample and Pattern of Analysis

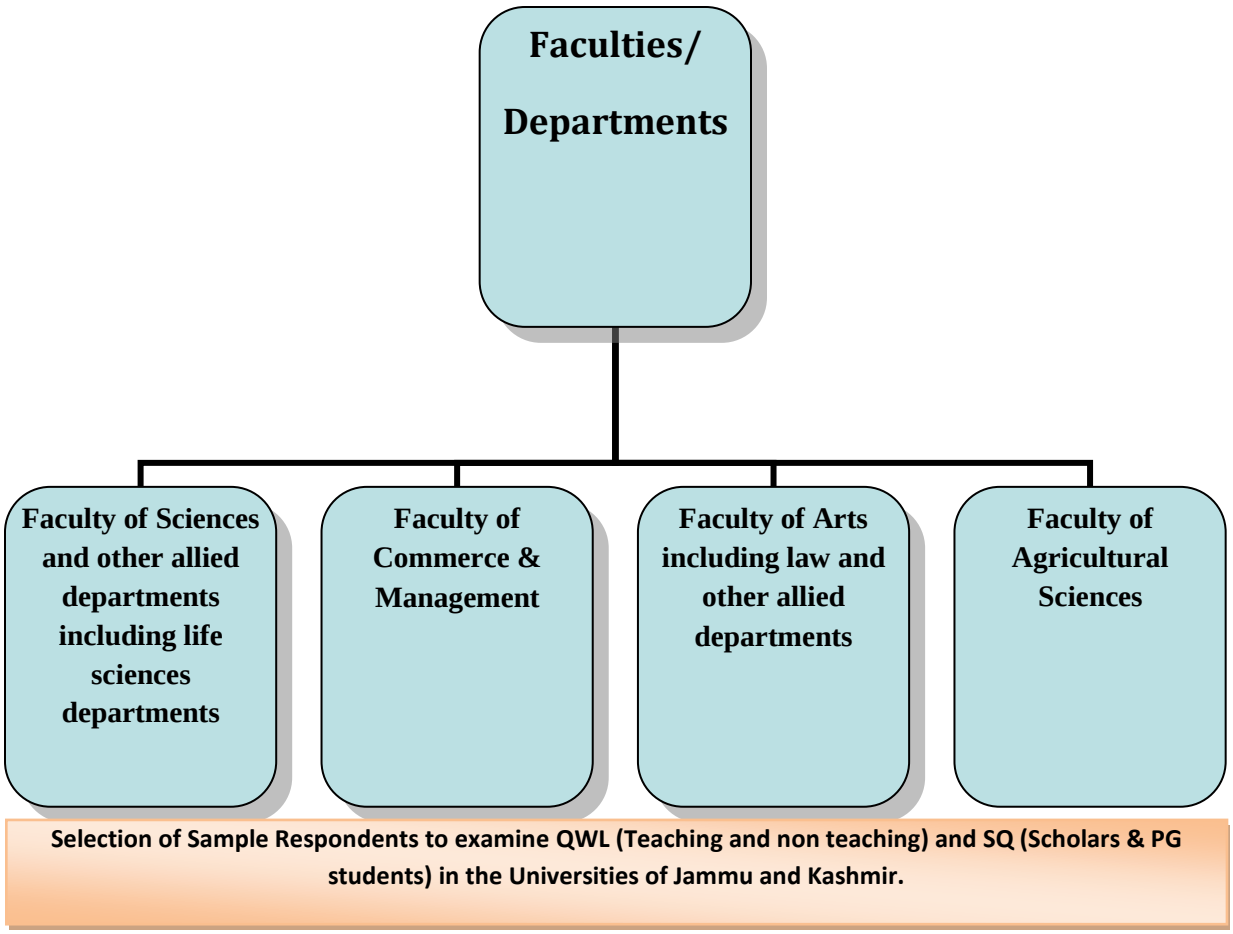
The sample shall include the following Universities of the state:

- University of Jammu (JU)

- University of Kashmir (KU)
- Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Jammu, (SKUASTJ)
- Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUASTK)
- Islamic University of Science & Technology, Awantipora (IUST)
- Baba Ghulam Shah Badhshah University, Rajouri (BGSBU),
- Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, Katra (SMVDU),
- Central University of Kashmir (CUK) and
- Central University of Jammu (CUJ)

The sample shall be collected as per the standard and desired requirement of the population. The sample respondents from which primary data shall be obtained to study QWL and SQ will be categorized on the basis of the faculty to which they (employees and students) belong. The Faculty/department shall be categorized into the faculty of Commerce & Management, Faculty of Sciences which shall include all the allied departments including life sciences and Faculty of Arts which will also include law and other department Further, in case of non teaching staff to assess QWL only gazetted officers shall be included in the sample study


Major Universities in J&K state
University Of Kashmir
I. U. S. T Awantipora
C.U of Jammu
University Of Jammu
C. U Of Kashmir
S.U.A.S.T Kashmir
S.U.A.S.T Jammu
S.M. V.D.U Katra
B.G.S.B.U, Rajouri


Faculties/ Departments
Faculty of Sciences and other allied departments including life sciences departments
Faculty of Commerce & Management
Faculty of Arts including law and other allied departments
Faculty of Agricultural Sciences
Selection of Sample Respondents to examine QWL (Teaching and non teaching) and SQ (Scholars & PG students) in the Universities of Jammu and Kashmir.

The analysis of the primary data collected shall be based on the guidelines evolved from the past researches done in the field. Prior to the analysis of the data, the past researches done in the field shall be studied thoroughly so as to follow a standard pattern of analysis. The statistical tools to measure QWL and SQ among respondents shall include mean, standard deviation, percentages, chi square, correlations and other tools whichever is deemed proper while going through the analysis.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY:

In the light of the hypotheses laid down and the research approach adopted, the study shall be worked out in the following tentative chapters.

1. **INTRODUCTION:**

This chapter shall aim at introducing the concepts of service quality and quality of work life in detail with special reference to service sector.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

This chapter shall examine the past research done in this area of research and the need for the present study. Further, review of literature will be presented under the headings of researches on QWL in India and abroad, researches on SQ in India and abroad, researches on relationship between QWL and SQ in India and abroad and the researches on QWL and SQ in Universities and Higher education.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This chapter will describe the research methodology to be used to investigate the problem and the advantages of the methodology in the context of the present research study. Further, this shall highlight the limitation of the current study.

4. ANALYSIS AND DATA INTERPRETATION

In this chapter an attempt shall be made to identify nature and dimensions of QWL and SQ prevalent in the major Universities of Jammu and Kashmir.

5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS:

In this chapter a summary of the findings and conclusions will be presented and workable suggestions will be recommended for improving service quality being offered by the employees to students and the scholars and QWL being offered to the employees by the management of the higher education system (Universities) in Jammu and Kashmir.

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